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COMPULSORY ARBITRATION IN GREAT BRITAIN DURING THE WAR

I. INTRODUCTION

At the outbreak of war in 1914 Great Britain faced the problem of securing the maximum of production with the least possible interruption. The increase in the cost of living, with the consequent movement for higher wages, caused several strikes in important industries prior to the outbreak of war. It was necessary for the government to bring labor and capital together on a common footing and to work out a plan whereby labor disputes would be settled before they became serious and menacing. England's solution of this problem was to supplement the voluntary co-operation of labor, capital, and the government by emergency legislation.

In August, 1914, one month after the beginning of war, an industrial truce was declared as a result of a special conference called by the Joint Board of the Trades-Union Congress, the General Federation of Trade Unions, and the Labor Party. This truce provided for an immediate effort to terminate all existing trade disputes and the discouragement of strikes and lockouts during the war period. As a result strikes were terminated, demands submitted to arbitration, and trade-union movements halted. Labor surrendered many attempts to increase and strengthen its position in industry. But this truce fell down, as is shown by the occurrence of important strikes, because of the "profiteering" of employers and the rise in the price of food. In March, 1915, the government took the next step in its program of securing industrial peace by voluntary co-operation with labor. This attempt, which was of a more formal nature, resulted in the Treasury Agreement. The important feature of this agreement was that "during the war period there should in no case be any stoppage of work upon munitions or other war work." Disputes were to be settled by voluntary arbitration and negotiation, and no binding effects were given to the agreement.

At this time there already existed a group of regulations known as the Defence of the Realm Act. Under this law severe penalties

were provided for persons "suspected of acting . . . in a manner prejudicial to the public safety or the defence of the realm." It applied to stoppages of work only as regards those who illegally incited workmen to strike. Because of the nature of the offenses within this act, its powers were brought into play only in extreme cases.

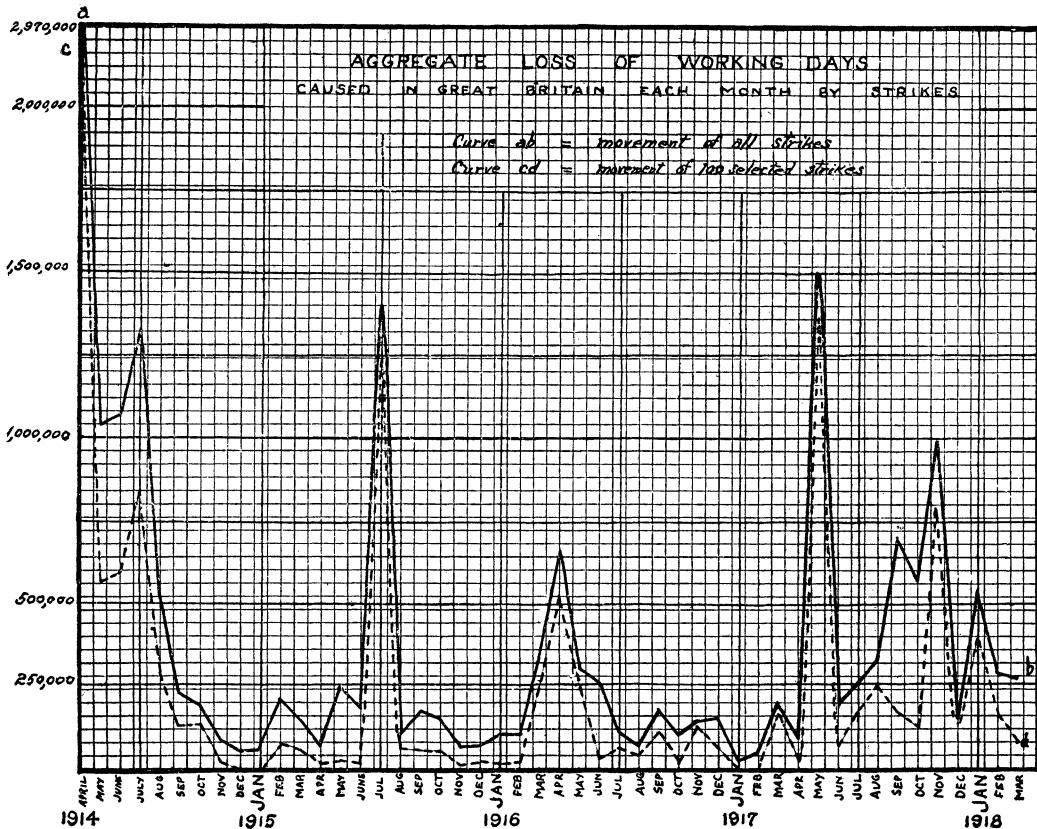
Strikes and lockouts were actually made illegal by the Munitions of War Act of July 2, 1915. The principal objects of this Act were the prevention of disputes, the abolition of trade-union regulations, and the limitation of profits. Section 2 of the Act provided that "an employer shall not declare, cause, or take part in a lock-out, and a person employed shall not take part in a strike, in connection with any difference . . . unless the difference has been reported to the Board of Trade, and twenty-one days have elapsed since the date of the report, and the difference has not during that time been referred by the Board of Trade for settlement in accordance with this Act. . . . If any person acts in contravention of this section, he shall be guilty of an offense under this Act." Section 7 provided that no workman could leave his employment without having secured a "leaving certificate" from his employer, under penalty of six weeks' unemployment. A workman was subject to a fine of £5 for each day on strike, and an employer was subject to a fine of £5 for each man locked out. The Act has been twice amended, first in January, 1916, and again in August, 1917. In general these amendments gave the workmen more freedom of movement, especially as regards the issuance of leaving certificates, and increased the extension of awards under the Act. On October 15, 1917, by proclamation, the Minister of Munitions, Winston Churchill, acting under powers granted him by the second amendment of the Act, 1917, repealed the section providing for leaving certificates and gave the workmen the right to leave their employment for other munitions work.

II. MOVEMENT OF STRIKES: 1914 TO 1918

The chart on page 884 shows the labor situation in Great Britain with reference to the occurrence and extent of strikes just prior to and during the war period. The figures upon which curves

ab and *cd* are based have been secured from the files of the *Board of Trade Labour Gazette* (now known as the *Labour Gazette*), the official government labor publication in the United Kingdom. From August, 1914, to March, 1918, inclusive, there were 2,504 strikes reported, in which 1,740,923 men were involved and which

CHART A



caused a total loss of 13,299,971 working days. Curve *ab* of the chart shows the movement of these 2,504 strikes. Curve *cd* shows the movement of about 100 selected strikes, comprising the most important ones, during the same period. It may be noted that there is no general movement of strikes either upward or downward, but that the large number of working days lost is due to

spontaneous outbursts on the part of workers in large and important industries. It is important to note that in practically every case of a strike or group of strikes which results in the formation of a peak on the chart the stoppage of work occurred in an establishment covered by the Munitions Act, either as a "controlled establishment" or otherwise, and therefore represents a violation of the law. The only indication of a strike "movement" may be said to have occurred during the last few months covered by the chart, beginning about September, 1917. On an average nearly 80,000 men were involved in strikes in each of the succeeding months. Table II sets out in detail the selected strikes covered by curve *cd*.

The immediate results of the industrial truce are seen by the direction of the curve during the first months covered by the chart. The number of working days lost through strikes dropped from nearly three million in April, 1914, to a half-million in August, 1914. It is evident that the patriotism and loyalty of the workers who were on strike at the beginning of the war played a large part in the immediate resumption of work in important industries. During the last five months of 1914 there were only 5 per cent as many workmen engaged in strikes as there were in the first seven months of the year.

The rise in the curve for 1915 shows the results of the increased cost of living, not followed by an increase of wages, causing a great deal of unrest. There was likewise a general feeling among the workers of the country that they were not receiving a proper share of the large profits flowing to their employers. Under these circumstances the Treasury Agreement, referred to above, was drawn up in March of that year. This agreement was entered into by the individuals and not by the British labor movement. Practically all of the important unions, with the exception of the miners', took part in it. The government also entered into individual agreements with certain unions about this time, such as the Munitions Output Compact with the Engineers and the Shells and Fuses Agreement, to induce labor to relax its trade-union practices. But these agreements proved to be merely the forerunners of the Munitions of War Act. The Act went into effect on July 2. Just previous to this the coal miners of South Wales had presented their demands

for higher wages to the operators with the strike alternative. Despite the proclamation under the Act bringing the coal miners within its provisions, 260,000 miners laid down their tools and remained on strike for a total of nine days in two periods. The strike was settled only by the act of Lloyd George in going to the scene of the disturbance and conceding the demands of the men. Since no one was to be penalized for the part taken in the strike it was recognized that the Munitions Act had failed to contribute to the result. The cost of this strike has been estimated at £1,500,000.

It is noticeable that after the passage of the Act, although strikes did occur, on the whole they were of much less duration than those previous to its passage. But this fact did not result in any lowering volume of strike losses. From July, 1915, to March, 1918, 1,871 strikes were reported, involving directly and indirectly 1,524,930 workmen, causing a loss of 11,316,700 working days. The latter period, which is covered by the Act, represents 75 per cent of the total war period, although 85 per cent of the total time lost through strikes during the war occurred at this time.

With the settlement of the coal dispute the curve makes a sharp descent and returns to its former position. During the remainder of 1915 and the early part of 1916 industry was comparatively quiet, with an average of approximately 100,000 working days lost per month. In 1916 there was not much deviation in the direction of the curve, the highest point being reached in the month of April. There was a decline in the number of strikes, the number of work people involved, and in the total time lost through strikes. Some uneasiness on the part of the men occurred during the year, owing to the opposition to the Munitions Act and to the introduction of military compulsion.

On January 27, 1916, the Act was amended, with the object of securing the workman against a neglect on the part of the employer to issue a certificate and against the possibility of not being employed because he had not come under the section at all. Provision was also made for notice to workmen before dismissal. These changes, however, did not wholly do away with the opposition of labor to this portion of the law. Deportations of strike leaders in April accounted for an increase in the number of days lost; a very

large strike occurred also in the textile industry of Dundee for an increase of wages. It was noticeable toward the end of the year that the number of disputes was becoming fewer and agreements were reached more quickly than had formerly been the case, but disputes were far from disappearing.

The first few months of 1917 continued to maintain this state of comparative peace and quiet in industry. Beginning in May, however, a period of widespread unrest set in, which extended throughout the rest of the year and into 1918. For the entire year there was an increase of 18 per cent in the number of strikes reported, while the number of working days lost increased by nearly 120 per cent over 1916. The series of strikes in May spread to all of the important engineering industries of the Kingdom. Before these strikes were settled a total of 160,000 men became idle and the time lost amounted to nearly one and one-half million working days. The next high point was reached in November, when 2,600 colliery examiners of South Wales and Monmouthshire struck over the question of recognition of the union, rendering 127,700 other workers idle. The men succeeded in gaining their point.

A very important modification of the Munitions of War Act also took place during the same year. By a new act, dated August 21, 1917, the Minister of Munitions, among other things, was given power to repeal the leaving-certificate provision of the original act (sec. 7) when he was satisfied that it could be repealed consistently with the interests of the nation. He was also empowered to extend awards applying to the majority of a trade to the minority. This had been promised to the trade-union officials six months before. No workman employed on or in connection with munitions work could be discharged on the ground that he had joined or was a member of a trade-union or that he had taken part in a strike. As a result of the industrial unrest which was prevalent earlier in the year the government set up eight commissions to inquire into the matter. These reports pointed out that the labor question was not being treated in the most efficient manner. Numerous examples were mentioned of the unnecessary application of the very stringent Defence of the Realm Act. The operation of the Munitions of War Acts, and especially the leaving-certificate

feature, had resulted in the increasing antagonism of labor toward the government labor administration. Delay in settling disputes, the high cost of living, profiteering, employers' spy systems, allegations of rate-cutting, withdrawal of the trade-card scheme, and the introduction of dilution on private work were shown to be responsible for most of the important strikes of the year. During the early months of 1918 the curve shows a tendency to maintain a comparatively high position. The important disputes which were reported occurred in the coal-mining, engineering, and shipbuilding trades.

Thus in the thirty-three months that the Munitions Acts have been in existence we have reports which show that over 1,500,000 workmen have violated these acts by participating in strikes. If these workmen were to be fined according to the provisions of the law the total amount of their fines would be over 55,000,000 pounds sterling. Table I shows how the 2,504 strikes which have occurred during the war are divided according to industries and trades.

III. MOVEMENT OF THE MOST IMPORTANT STRIKES

Table II consists of about one hundred selected strikes which have occurred during the period covered by the chart. These strikes are the most important ones which have occurred during that time. Not every month is represented on the table and in some months the strikes are more rigidly selected than in others. Their movement is shown by the dotted line *cd*. It should be noted that there is a marked similarity in the direction of the two curves. It is likewise noteworthy that for the most part the few important strikes which occurred each month represent practically the entire time lost by all the strikes during the same month. Thus we can say, generally, that the industrial unrest for the immediate pre-war period and for the war period is the result of a few important strikes, which were of sufficient extent and duration to cause a large amount of lost time in the particular industries affected.

In Table II there are 80 selected strikes which took place after the passage of the Munitions Act, 1915. These strikes, therefore, may be said to tell, with comparative accuracy, how the Act actually worked out in practice. In these 80 strikes 989,401 men

TABLE I
STRIKES IN GREAT BRITAIN (BY INDUSTRIES) AUGUST, 1914, TO MARCH, 1918

INDUSTRY	1914 (AUGUST TO DECEMBER)			1915			1916			1917			1918 (JANUARY TO MARCH)		
	No.	Men Involved	Aggregate Loss of Working Days	No.	Men Involved	Aggregate Loss of Working Days	No.	Men Involved	Aggregate Loss of Working Days	No.	Men Involved	Aggregate Loss of Working Days	No.	Men Involved	Aggregate Loss of Working Days
Building.....	34	1,244	59,874	66	15,935	135,204	76	7,679	16,600	53	6,897	85,300	41	20,649	214,700
Coal mining.....	44	21,247	254,287	79	297,801	1,610,899	67	61,611	310,600	116	267,045	1,098,400	21	24,359	130,500
Other mining.....	6	399	49,796	6	337	15,550	7	1,159	10,600	12	7,100	72,400			
Engineering.....	16	2,363	277,947	97	24,488	227,768	59	49,233	23,000	94	316,499	2,427,900	45	25,686	150,000
Shipbuilding.....	16	1,177	20,113	46	6,839	49,741	28	22,111	70,300	49	40,091	326,000	45	12,585	205,000
Other metal.....	16	2,907	63,550	48	15,493	88,199	26	4,483	11,100	38	30,100	16,100	35	17,501	180,500
Textile.....	16	3,138	284,188	69	33,107	373,451	75	61,238	1,166,100	65	62,887	653,300	15	20,625	99,100
Clothing.....	13	1,463	48,200	40	5,525	27,629	44	15,774	1,56,100	42	13,942	145,800	14	3,790	36,500
Transport.....	20	1,791	24,528	86	26,600	177,52	60	35,578	15,000	40	20,740	188,400	14	2,161	12,400
Miscellaneous.....	46	1,479	3,425	109	26,556	302,171	139	26,510	324,200	179	50,317	351,300	72	19,475	123,700
Total.....	227	36,393	1,003,537	706	452,571	3,038,134	581	284,396	2,590,800	688	8,077	5,515,900	302	146,831	1,144,600

Total number of strikes, 2,504; total number of workmen involved, 1,740,923; total aggregate working days lost, 13,299,971.

TABLE II
100 SELECTED STRIKES IN GREAT BRITAIN, 1914 TO 1918

Date Began	Industry	Locality	Workmen Involved	Duration in Days	Aggregate Working Days Lost	Cause or Object	Result
1914	Building	London	20,000	170	Not known	Refuse to work with nonunionists	Settled outbreak of war
	Coal mine	Yorkshire	150,000	52	Not known	Wages dispute	Joint district board to settle
	Molder	Warrington	828	52	43,056	Recognition of union leaders	Strikers reinstated
	Electrical	London	900	168	91,200	Advance in wages; union rules	Wages raised; demands granted
	Iron and steel	Glasgow	995	83	81,585	Advance in wages	Arbitrator appointed
	Tube works	Swansea	1,451	18	20,118	Dismissal of certain men	Work resumed
	Engineer	Accrington	4,500	94	423,000	Advance in wages; union rules	Wages raised; agreement with union
	Engineer	Woolwich	12,000	5	60,000	Reinstatement of a man	Court of inquiry appointed
	Coal mine	Merthyr Tydfil	6,000	5	30,000	Refuse to work with nonunionists	Nonunionists joined union
	Docks	Mersey	3,000	21	63,000	Recognition of union	Board appointed
1915	Building	Cork	420	34	14,280	Advance in wages	Wages increased
	Coal mine	Ruabon	1,375	4	5,500	Minimum wage act	Compromise
	Seaman	Liverpool	1,000	10	10,000	Advance in wages	Wages increased
	Engineer	Clyde	7,800	14	109,200	Advance in wages	Arbitration
	Brass molder	Clyde	550	22	12,100	Advance in wages	Arrived at agreement
	Docks	Birkenhead	2,000	8	16,000	Working conditions	7½ per cent bonus granted
	Iron castor	Walsall	570	18	10,260	War bonus of 10 per cent	Nonunionists joined union
	Coal mine	Pontardawe	840	7	5,880	Union rules	10 per cent bonus granted
	Engineer	Bristol	700	8	5,060	War bonus of 15 per cent	Wages increased
	Building	Northampton	639	24	15,336	Advance in wages	No increase
1916	Building	Macclesfield	170	41	8,000	Working conditions	Wages increased
	Explosives	South Wales	60,000	3	180,000	Advance in wages	Nonunionists joined union
	Coal mine	South Wales	200,000	6	1,200,000	Advance in wages	Demands granted
	Coal mine	South Wales	12,000	7	84,000	Advance in wages	Nonunionists joined union
	Coal mine	Rhondda	2,000	5	11,420	Trade-union rules	Nonunionists employed
	Coal mine	Rhondda	120,000	5	7,236	Working conditions	Working conditions
	Colliers	Gateshead	1,200	6	35,820	Nonunionists employed	Nonunionists employed
	Coal mine	Barnsley	995	36	14,160	Nonunionists employed	Nonunionists employed
	Coal mine	Aberdeen	1,770	7	10,360	Nonunionists employed	Nonunionists employed
	Coal mine	Rhondda	1,480	7	26,014	Nonunionists employed	Modified increase
1917	Coal mine	Yorkshire	3,802	7	67,000	15 per cent advance in wages	
	Engineer		500	134			

1916	Jan.	1.....	Coal mine	Newport	989	3	2,907	Wage dispute	Investigation by Conciliation Board				
	Feb.	1.....	Engineer	Glasgow	365	6	2,100	Introduction of female labor	Work resumed				
	Mar.	17.....	Cartridge (female)	Leeds	2,200	3	6,600	Rights of "shop representatives"	Amicable settlement				
	Feb.	17.....	Engineer	Glasgow	2,000	15	30,000	Working conditions	Work resumed on old terms				
	Mar.	23.....	Engineer	Belfast	1,867	12	21,684	Work resumes on old terms	Work resumed on old terms				
	Mar.	24.....	Textile	Dundee	30,000	64	Not known	Disatisfied with wage award	Nonunionists joined union				
	Mar.	29.....	Docks	Liverpool	15,000	4	60,000	Advance in wages	Wages increased				
	Apr.	3.....	Coal mine	Ayr	816	16	13,056	Disatisfied with wage award	Work resumed				
	Apr.	7.....	Wire	Doncaster	378	16	2,268	Disatisfied with wage award	Abstraction				
	June	26.....	Engineer	Barrow	7,000	6	42,000	Advance in wages	Score - prices advanced				
	July	1.....	Shipyards	Birkenhead	10,300	4	42,000	Dilution of labor	Work resumed unconditionally				
	July	12.....	Coal mine	Bishop Auck.	1,500	5	7,500	Hours of labor	Change granted				
	July	17.....	Coal mine	Cardiff	1,870	6	11,220	Disatisfied with wage award	Change granted				
	Aug.	1.....	Coal mine	Hamilton	1,328	3	3,084	Working conditions	Partial concession				
	Aug.	22.....	Coal mine	Rhondda	3,000	11	33,000	Working conditions	Redress promised				
	Aug.	28.....	Textile	Wigan	4,000	30	120,000	5 per cent advance in wages	Investigation; work resumed				
	Sept.	1.....	Engineer	Cleve	3,209	1	3,209	Working conditions	Investigation				
	Oct.	28.....	Clothing	Sheffield	2,700	40	108,000	25 per cent war bonus	Modifed increase granted				
	Nov.	4.....	Coal mine	Sheffield	1,337	7	10,759	Payment of wages	Minister of Munitions Inquiry				
	Nov.	19.....	Engineer	Manchester	12,000	3	36,000	Release of a man from force	Investigation				
	Nov.	39.....	Coal mine	Monmouthshire	15,000	6	90,000	Disatisfied with wage award	Increase granted				
	Dec.	7.....	Shipbuilding	Liverpool	9,000	2	18,000	Advance in wages	Work resumed; investigation				
	Dec.	11.....			4,000	6	24,000	Dilution of labor					
1917	Jan.	8.....	Machinists (female)	Leeds	2,776	2	5,532	War bonus; dismissal of a girl					
	Jan.	29.....	Coal mine	Hamilton	2,000	2	4,000	Wages and other grievances					
	Feb.	15.....	Aircraft	Lincoln	300	5	1,500	Advance in wages					
	Mar.	19.....	Engineer	Tyne	15,500	6	93,000	Alleged cut of time allowance					
	Mar.	21.....	Engineer	Barrow	8,000	12	96,000	Working conditions					
	April	4.....	Coal mine	Newport	1,796	12	3,592	Dilution of labor; trade-card scheme					
	May	25.....	Engineer	General	160,000	9	1,440,000	Advance in wages					
	June	15.....	Coal mine	Glasgow	10,000	20,000	20,000	Wage dispute					
	June	15.....	Iron ore	Barrow	880	6	5,286						
	June	11.....	Malleable iron	Walsall	1,100	5	5,500	Wage award					
	June	25.....	Rivets	Clyde	2,546	9	22,914	Wage award					
	July	5.....	Engineer	Swansea	7,500	6	45,000	Advance in wages					
	July	6.....	Engineer	Mersey	6,300	12	78,000	Working conditions					
	July	24.....	Coal mine	Ebbw Vale	8,350	6	59,500	Wage claim					
	July	25.....	Coal mine	Tredegar	3,500	6	21,000	Certain official					
	Aug.	2.....	Tubes	Wendlesbury	1,400	15	55,000	Advance in wages					
	Aug.	13.....	Iron ore	Cumberland	5,000	11	55,000	Recruiting scheme					
	Aug.	6.....	Coal mine	Yorkshire	27,000	6	162,000	Scheme suspended					

TABLE II—Continued

Date Begun	Industry	Locality	Workmen Involved	Duration in Days	Aggregate Working Days Lost	Cause or Object	Result
<i>1917—Cont.</i>							
Aug. 20.....	Coal mine	Swansea	1,368	46	62,928	Minimum wage	Granted
Sept. 6.....	Coal mine	Wakefield	1,547	45	60,015	Price of coal to miners	Price lowered
Sept. 14.....	Iron	Cardiff	6,000	17	102,000	Arbitration award	Negotiations
Sept. 17.....	Coal mine	Walsall	2,300	18	41,400	Working conditions	Change granted
Sept. 20.....	Coal mine	Merthyr Tydfil	12,000	3	36,000	25 per cent advance in wages	Negotiations
Oct. 16.....	Steel	London	2,000	8	16,000	Wage dispute	Amicable settlement
Oct. 29.....	Aircraft	Mansfield	4,000	6	24,000	Payment system	Only union men to be employed
Oct. 30.....	Coal mine	Mansfield	798	29	23,142	Refuse to work with nonunionist	Union recognized
Nov. 1.....	Colliery	South Wales	150,300	3	390,900	Recognition of union	Price reduced 10s. per ton
Nov. 12.....	Shipbuilding	Cowes	6,000	9	54,000	High retail price of coal	Granted
Nov. 14.....	Engineer	Belfast	4,000	16	64,000	Bonus	Local conferences
Nov. 26.....	Aéroplane	Coventry	50,000	7	350,000	Recognition of shop stewards	Negotiations
Dec. 19.....	Shipbuilding	Belfast	3,000	10	39,000	Dissatisfaction with wage award	7½ per cent allowed
Dec. 27.....	Engineer	Birkenhead	1,121	6	6,726	Bonus of 12½ per cent	7½ per cent allowed
Dec. 31.....	Iron and steel	Sheffield	15,000	6	90,000	Bonus of 12½ per cent	Granted
Dec. 27.....	Engineer	Clyde	8,000	6	48,000	Bonus of 12½ per cent	7½ per cent allowed
Dec. 31.....	Engineer	Manchester	3,004	5	18,020	Bonus of 12½ per cent	Granted
<i>1918</i>							
Jan. 11.....	Building	South Wales	10,000	20	Not known	Advance in wages	Work resumed; negotiations
Jan. 16.....	Engineer	Clyde	1,276	30	38,380	Over wage award	Negotiations
Jan. 16.....	Engineer	Birmingham	8,000	4	32,000	Transference of a worker	Demand conceded
Jan. 16.....	Engineer	Darlaston	4,000	9	36,000	Bonus of 12½ per cent	Negotiations
Jan. 22.....	Engineer	Mansfield	1,770	12	21,240	Pit boy struck by "corporal"	Pit boy prosecuted
Feb. 2.....	Coal mine	Barnsley	2,477	10	24,770	Advance in wages	Increase granted
Feb. 13.....	Coal mine	Belfast	2,676	17	45,492	Advance in wages	Negotiations
Feb. 19.....	Engineer	Southport	15,597	4	62,388	Bonus of 15 per cent	Arbitration
Feb. 27.....	Engineer	Southport	1,000	11	11,000	Dismissal of a workman	Workman reinstated
Mar. 7.....	Coal mine	South Yorkshire	1,200	7	8,400	Advance in wages	Work resumed; inquiry
Mar. 13.....	Colliery	Ebbw Vale	5,000	1	5,000	Advance in wages	Work resumed
Mar. 19.....	Engineer	Leeds	6,993	8	55,944	Dismissed workman	Workman reinstated

Totals for 80 selected strikes, July, 1915, to March, 1918: 989,401 workmen involved; 8,351,160 working days lost.

took part and an aggregate loss of 8,351,190 working days resulted. During this period 1,841 strikes were reported; but the 80 large strikes, though only little more than 4 per cent of the total, involved about 65 per cent of the total number of men who took part in strikes and account for nearly 74 per cent of the total number of working days lost in all the strikes since the Act went into effect. About three-fourths of all the strikes reported were over questions of wages.

Most of the strikes for increased wages were settled by granting the increases demanded. In many cases of strikes for other objectives the men's demands were conceded. In only a relatively small number of instances did the men lose outright. The larger strikes were in the main settled by the personal intervention of some governmental official, who was able to deal with the strikers by proceeding to the scene of the disturbance and bringing the different parties together. A very frequent agency used was a plea on the basis of the country's war needs, and in many cases this was the sole reason for the settlement of the strike. By considering a few of the very important strikes it is possible to ascertain just how many of the strikes were actually dealt with by the government.

The wages agreement between the South Wales coal miners and owners expired about July 1, 1915. Dissatisfaction among the men had been growing for some time owing to reports that the operators were making enormous profits out of the war. The men asked that a new agreement be made at the expiration of the old one, but the owners refused to do so during the war and negotiations between the parties were broken off. The immediate question arose over the establishment of a new standard of wages. The standard which was being used at that time had been fixed in 1877 and 1879, when prices were low. The miners asked that the standard be raised by 50 per cent. They also demanded that they be allowed a minimum which was to be 10 per cent above the new standard, and in addition an actual and immediate raise in wages of 5 per cent. They desired a three years' agreement. The Board of Trade attempted to settle the differences in conference with the owners and the South Wales Miners' Federation. The men delivered the strike ultimatum. In order to keep the men at work while negotiations were being carried

on partial concessions were granted by the owners and the men were hired on day-to-day contracts. The coal owners replied to the men's demands for an advance of 20 per cent on actual earnings by an offer of 10 per cent. On July 13, 1915, Runciman, president of the Board of Trade, announced in the House of Commons that the government had decided to apply by proclamation the Munitions of War Act for settlement. This proclamation failed to have any effect, and a card vote was taken as to the time for beginning the strike. This resulted in a decision to stop work, by 88,950 votes to 47,450. Lloyd George then went to Cardiff, along with Runciman and Arthur Henderson. Lloyd George was successful in inducing the strikers to give way, but only after conceding to them substantially their own terms. The agreement was to continue for six months after the war and thereafter was to be subject to three months' notice from either party before its termination. Despite the proclamation the penalties provided by the Act for striking were not to be imposed.

The reports of prosecutions under the Act are very vague and incomplete. The official *Command Papers*, the columns of the *Manchester Guardian* and *London Times*, and the *Labour Gazette* have not sufficed to produce the material for an analysis of this feature of the Act. The charges were made that reports of all the violations and prosecutions were not given out to the public. In November, 1915, the *New Statesman* declared that every day in the week from sixty to seventy cases were heard by the courts and that the legal chairmen were not giving the men an opportunity to protect themselves. In October three shipwrights were imprisoned, and 97,000 organized workmen threatened to cripple all the factories on the Clyde if the men were not released, as a result of which the Ministry of Munitions was forced to release the men. Lord Balfour, in a report on the grievances of the Clyde Munition Workers in 1915, expressly recommended the abolition of all liability to imprisonment under the Munitions Act.

The engineering disturbances of March and April, 1916, brought to light a new movement among the workers, which may be termed the "shop steward" movement. At that time it was officially reported that strikes had been brought about at different times by

a self-appointed body known as the Clyde Workers' Committee. It seems that this body had decided to hold up the production of the most important munitions in the Clyde district, with the object of compelling the government to repeal the Military Service Act and the Munitions Act and to withdraw all limitations upon increases of wages and strikes. A series of strikes occurred about this time which indicated that a systematic plan was under way by which a certain number of very vital workers in different plants would be withdrawn at the same instant. The grievance usually presented was a demand for the free movement of a workman throughout the shop for the purpose of investigating what was being done with unskilled workers in different parts of the works. The situation grew so serious that the Munitions Ministry felt it necessary to take action under section 14 of the Defence of the Realm Act and requested the military authorities to remove six of the ringleaders. This was done. The movement of which these men were the leaders was repudiated by the officials of the trade-unions. The action of the government in having the men deported, although it gave rise to protest and in some cases greatly extended the number of men on strike, was rather successful in leading to a termination of the disputes. The Amalgamated Society of Engineers refused to protest against the deportations. Later, three more men were deported, and 30 of the strikers were fined £5 each at Glasgow. Sheriff Fyfe held that the men must return to work pending a settlement.

Besides the fact that the number of disputes became smaller during 1916, as we have already seen, agreements to settle them were reached more quickly than had formerly been the case. In the middle of November a serious wage dispute again arose in South Wales, and the new method adopted by the government to meet such difficulties was to make a regulation under the Defence of the Realm Act under which, whenever the Board of Trade were of the opinion that it was necessary for securing the public safety and the defense of the realm, they should have the power to take over any coal mine in an area in which the regulations applied. On December 1, 1916, this regulation was applied to the South Wales coal field. The men were greatly displeased with the action of the

government in invoking the Defence Act in order to bring the dispute to an end. The Coalowners' Association likewise protested against the action of the government. Soon after government control went into effect the Board of Trade granted a wage increase of 10 per cent, dating from December 1, 1916.

In June 5,500 engineers and allied tradesmen went on strike at Barrow because of the alleged introduction of diluted labor on skilled men's work. It was explained to the men that their strike was a violation of the Treasury Agreement between their unions and the government and also a breach of the Munitions Act. The strike was repudiated by the Executive Council of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers. A notice was then published giving the men forty-eight hours in which to return to work, with an intimation that, failing to do so, proceedings would be taken under the Defence of the Realm Act against those who had instigated the strike and under the Munitions of War Act against those who had taken part in it. All picketing was prevented and all public houses were closed. The threat of the government was successful in ending the strike. The same method was brought into use in the case of the strike of the Mersey boiler-makers in December, with the same results.

Early in 1916 the Ministry of Munitions published a report on prosecutions under the Munitions Act. Up to the end of the first week of February 555 munition workers had been convicted for striking by the tribunals established under the Act, and the average of the fines imposed had worked out at a little under 30s. for each man convicted. Seventy-one employers had been convicted for enticing workers away from their employment, and were fined on an average over £5 each, exclusive of costs. Before the local tribunals the greater number of cases were applications by workmen for leaving certificates. There were 5,658 of these applications, of which 1,447 were granted and 2,510 refused, while 1,472 were withdrawn or dismissed. In 229 cases the court decided that no certificate was required. There were altogether 4,054 convictions for breaches of workshop rules, for which fines to the amount of £3,292 15s. were imposed. According to this report, about one-

fifth of 1 per cent of the men taking part in strikes were actually prosecuted under the Act.

Several of the strikes which occurred during 1917 are indicative of the general lack of faith among the men as to the practicability of government arbitration in settling grievances with dispatch. In some cases the men alleged that the time allowance for the work done under the premium bonus system had been cut and that employers were entirely disregarding the arrangement. Disputes on this point had been occurring for many months, and the object of the men in striking, they said, was to bring the whole question to the notice of the government. In a strike upon this point in March, at Barrow, certain shop stewards acted upon their own initiative, without the sanction or knowledge of the recognized trade-unions. The government posted notices calling attention to the gravity of the strike and to the Defence Act, and announcing that it proposed to take action under it after twenty-four hours unless work was resumed. Despite the advices of the leaders the men had voted to remain on strike, but after the threat of the government they returned to work. The grievances were to be settled later by local conference.

The disturbances of May, 1917, which practically crippled the entire engineering industry of Great Britain, produced a very serious situation in the supply of war materials. The immediate causes of the stoppages in different localities varied somewhat, but the general spirit of unrest had been prevalent for some time. The walkout followed upon the action of the government in withdrawing the trade-card scheme and introducing dilution in private engineering work. The government felt that such measures were necessary for an increase in production and promised the men that it was only a temporary solution. In general the strikes represented a movement of the rank and file; the officials of the trade-unions had nothing to do with it. In connection with these strikes an employer of Rochdale was summoned before the Munitions Tribunal at that place for two breaches of the Munitions Act, which were alleged to have been responsible for the stoppage in that district. The employer was fined, the charge being that he had failed to give

due notice to the men of a change of working conditions which it was desired to introduce. Leading government officials went to the different engineering centers to attempt to settle the differences. Notices were issued by the government that the Defence Act would be used to settle the strike if necessary. The press declared that the strike was as much a protest against the executive authority of the trade-unions as a protest against any action of the government. The Amalgamated Society of Engineers announced that they had not authorized any cessation of work. The *Manchester Guardian* deplored the unwisdom of the government policy of withholding information from the public and prohibiting discussion in the press of a free and salutary public opinion. While the men in some districts balloted to return to work, others joined the strike movement, thus increasing the gravity of the situation. In the London region seven strike leaders were arrested under the Defence Act, charged with promoting strikes and attempting to impede production and transportation of war material. These men were probably members of the Shop Stewards' Committee. The strike was finally brought to an end by the intervention of the Prime Minister. The arrested men were released on their own recognizance and no further arrests were made. The unofficial leaders of the strike were to leave further negotiations with the government regarding existing differences to the trade-union officials. These results were accomplished at a conference at the Ministry of Munitions between the representatives of the Shop Stewards' Committee and the Amalgamated Society of Engineers. After the settlement there were some minor prosecutions on account of the strike, for the most part of shop stewards, but in practically every case the prosecutor asked to have the charges withdrawn after the return to work.

Other disputes of the year which threatened to become very serious were those of the Locomotive Engineers and Firemen in August and the South Wales miners in November. In the former case the Board of Trade averted a strike by making certain promises to the railway men, and in the latter case the demands of the men for recognition of the union were conceded. About the same time

there occurred a "down-tools" ballot in South Wales on the "comb-out" for military service. The South Wales Miners' Conference had broken away from the agreement approved by the Miners' Federation of Great Britain. It was decided, however, to resume work forthwith "rather than imperil our nation in these days of stress and difficulty," and to negotiate while at work.

The important event of the early months of 1918 was the friction which developed between the government and the Amalgamated Society of Engineers over the government's man-power scheme. Henderson declared in February that the industrial situation was graver than at any time during the war and that "the unyielding attitude of the Government is bringing the country on the verge of industrial revolution." A conference of "national representatives" from the engineering workshops was held in Manchester and decided that a strike should be declared on April 6 as a protest against the government's policy, but this action was later rescinded.

IV. CONCLUSION

On the basis of this information it is possible to come to some conclusion regarding the efficacy and desirability of introducing antistrike legislation as a means of establishing industrial peace during the war. Great Britain established two methods of dealing with strikes: the Defence of the Realm Act and the Munitions of War Acts of 1915, 1916, and 1917; the one of a criminal nature, the other providing for compulsory arbitration. The information available is not complete enough to show the exact number of cases in which the law was invoked to bring about a settlement or when it was successful in achieving this result. It is a fact, however, that strikes have increased proportionately since the passage of the Munitions of War Acts. It has already been stated that, although the time during which the Acts have operated is only 75 per cent of the total war period, 85 per cent of the total time lost by strikes throughout the war has occurred in this period. Less than one hundred of the most important strikes, practically all of which were in violation of the law, in which nearly one million men took part,

caused an aggregate loss of over 8,000,000 working days. The industries showing the greatest loss due to strikes are among the most vital war industries. The attitude of the government toward one of the strongest compulsory features is evidenced by the repeal of the leaving-certificate provision in October, 1917. Leading labor men of the Kingdom have expressed their dissatisfaction with the principle of compulsion during the war. Further developments have yet to show us which policy will ultimately prevail in Great Britain.

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